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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10

LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 L-03

NSC-10 PA-03 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-19

IO-15 OMB-01 DRC-01 SAJ-01 /168 W
---------- 096604
R 281843Z SEP 73
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3608
INFO AMCONSUL BORDEAUX
AMCONSUL LYON
AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE
AMCONSUL NICE
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

UNCLAS PARIS 25561

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS : PLAB
SUBJECT : TRADE UNION REACTION TO PRESIDENT POMPIDOU'S PRESS CONFE-
RENCE

REF : PARIS 25405

1. SUMMARY : REACTING TO PRESIDENT POMPIDOU'S SEPTEMBER 27
PRESS CONFERENCE, TRADE UNIONS GENERALLY REGRETTED RELATIVELY
LIGHT COVERAGE OF LABOR/SOCIAL ISSUES. VIRTUALLY UNANIMOUS REACTION
TO PRESIDENT'S ALLUSION TO POSSIBLE NEED FOR INCOMES POLICY WAS
EMPHATICALLY NEGATIVE. END SUMMARY

2. PRESIDENT POMPIDOU'S SEPTEMBER 27 PRESS CONFERENCE
(REFTEL) TOUCHED A NUMBER OF LABOR-RELATED ISSUES. INITIAL TRADE
UNION REACTION WAS AS FOLLOWS :

3. ALGERIAN IMMIGRATION. WHILE FORCE OUVRIERE EXPRESSED
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SATISFACTION AT PRESIDENT'S REMARKS ON THIS SUBJECT , CGT

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FOUND "UNACCEPTABLE IN THE FACE OF AVAILABLE EVIDENCE" THE PRESIDENT'S ASSERTION THAT THERE IS NO RACISM IN FRANCE, CGT REPROACHED GOF FOR ALLEGED FAILURE TO ENFORCE ANTI-RACIST LEGISLATION ALREADY ON THE BOOKS. CGC TACITLY APPROVED THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT. WHILE ADVOCATING EQUAL TREATMENT FOR IMMIGRANTS, CGC WOULD TAKE STRICT MEASURES TO CONTROL ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION.

4. INFLATION. CGT TOOK PRESIDENT TO TASK FOR ALLEGEDLY FATALISTIC ATTITUDE TO PROBLEM, FOR ABSENCE OF POSITIVE MEASURES TO DEAL WITH IT, AND FOR THREAT OF AUSTERITY MEASURES AND WAGE CONTROL. FORCE OUVRIERE FELT THAT AUTHORITARIAN APPROACH WOULD BE A MISTAKE, AND RE-STATED ITS FAITH IN "CONTRACTUAL POLICY". CFTC, TOO, WARNED AGAINST INCOMES POLICY, AND SUGGESTED GLOBAL CONTRACTUAL EFFORT AT NATIONAL LEVEL. TONGUE IN CHEEK, THE CFDT CONCLUDED THAT, AS PRESIDENT PROPOSED NO SPECIFIC MEASURES TO DEAL WITH IT, GOF IS SATISFIED WITH PRESENT LEVEL OF INFLATION. THE CGC AND THE FAMILY ASSOCIATIONS DEPLORED ANY PROSPECT OF WAGE CONTROL, WHICH WOULD "SACRIFICE THE LITTLE MAN".

5. LIP . PRESIDENT'S ALLEGED EMBARRASSMENT AT QUESTION OF LIP (REFTEL, IN CGT VIEW, INDICATED DIFFICULTY GOVERNMENT IS EXPERIENCING IN EVADING ITS HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY IN THIS LONG LABOR CONFLICT. FORCE OUVRIERE, HOWEVER, SAW AS POSITIVE ELEMENT GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO SEEK AMENDMENT OF BANKRUPTCY LAW TO BETTER PROTECT WORKER INTERESTS. UCT REPROACHED PRESIDENT FOR ALLEGED FAILURE TO SEE IN LIP AFFAIR A "XHALELENGE TO THE VERY NATURE OF THE ENTERPRISE AND TO THE EXERCISE OF POWER THEREIN".

6. CFT (CONFEDERATION FRANCAISE DU TRAVAIL) EXPRESSED ASTONISHMENT THAT IT WAS ONLY AFTER MONTHS OF "FALSE PROPAGANDA" THAT PRESIDENT FINALLY REVEALED LIP AFFAIR IN TRUE LIGHT AS ACTION DIVERTED BY FEW, CONTRARY TO INTERESTS OF OTHER WORKERS.

7. FOR THE CFDT (MAJORITY UNION AT LIP) PRESIDENT'S REMARKS SOUGHT TO MINIMIZE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY AND TO REPRESENT WORKER DEMANDS AS SIMPLE EFFORT TO MAINTAIN STATUS QUO AGAINST BEST ECONOMIC INTEREST OF ENTERPRISE. BUT, ACCORDING TO CFDT, GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSED CHANGE IN BANKRUPTCY LAW IS TACIT ADMISSION OF ITS RESPONSIBILITY, A RESPONSIBILITY WHICH NOW RE-
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QUIRES THAT IT ASSURE LIP SOLUTION ACCEPTABLE TO WORKERS.

8. MISCELLANEOUS. CGT DEPLORED PRESIDENT'S REMARKS ON CHILE, TENOR OF WHICH ALLEGEDLY FAVORED PUTSCH. FORCE OUVRIERE, WELCOMING GOVERNMENT INTENTION TO UPGRADE MANUAL WORK, UNDERSCORED NEED FOR GREATER EMPHASIS ON TECHNICAL TRAINING IN NATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM.

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9. COMMENT : PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT ON LIP (AND CFT REACTION) DID REAL SERVICE IN DISPELLING FRAUDULENT MYTH OF "NOBLE EXPERIMENT" AT BESANCON, A MYTH MURTURED BY A SOCIAL PRESS UNDISTINGUISHED FOR OBJECTIVITY OR FORTITUDE.

10. TRADE UNION REJECTION OF INCOMES POLICY, ACCOMPANIED BY DEMAND FOR CONTROL OF INFLATION, MAY APPEAR IRRECONCILABLE, BUT UNIONS CONTEND - AS, UNTIL RECENTLY, DID GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN - THAT WAGE INCREASES ARE NOT A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN FRENCH INFLATION.IRWIN

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